UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RESEARCH INITIATIVES

UC Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) - AWARD YEAR 2025
v. March 20, 2024

Overview of Funding Opportunity

The University of California (UC) is pleased to announce a research funding opportunity for UC multicampus collaborations. Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPIs) are multicampus or systemwide research collaborations that go beyond individual Principal Investigator (PI)-driven projects to: benefit the UC research enterprise; strengthen UC's position as a leading public research university; launch pioneering research in thematic, multidisciplinary, or inter-disciplinary areas; enhance education and training; inform policy; and benefit California and its people. The competition is open to all fields of scholarship. Applicants will be asked to indicate which disciplines or interdisciplinary thematic areas best describe the proposed collaboration. Proposals must be submitted by UC PIs.

This funding opportunity includes two award types:

1) Planning/Pilot awards (1-2 years): open *only to new* multicampus or systemwide collaborations.
2) Program awards (2-4 years): open to *both new and established* collaborations as well as *prior recipients* of MRPI Planning/Pilot awards.

Applicants may apply for <u>only one</u> of the two award types, and key personnel (PI, Co-PI, and Co-I) may participate in ***only one*** proposal.

Both award types require the participation of **at least three UC campuses** and may also include collaboration with one or more UC-affiliated sites, including UC-affiliated national laboratories, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, any of the five UC medical centers, and UC Law San Francisco.

We anticipate approximately $16 million in available funding for new awards across both award types. MRPI competitions are highly competitive, often eliciting over 200 Letters of Intent, and yielding funding success rates between 9-22%. To ensure proposals meet eligibility requirements and fulfill program priorities, **applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) as the first step in the application process**. The full proposal materials are available only after approval of the LOI.

LOIs and full proposals must be submitted through the *SmartSimple* portal. Review the RFP and submission instructions carefully. All proposals must conform to the requirements of the 2025 MRPI RFP, and (where they differ) not to prior versions of the RFP. It is the applicant's responsibility to check the UC Research Initiatives website for any program updates prior to proposal submission. Explore abstracts of prior and current MRPI awards on UCRI's website and funded research database.

Key Dates

RFP Release and Announcement: Wednesday, March 20, 2024
Applicant Webinar: Visit the MRPI webpage for dates and registration information
Letters of Intent (LOI) Due: Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time
Notification of LOI Decision: Thursday, June 6, 2024 (expected)
Full Proposals Due: Thursday, August 8, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time
Notification of Review Outcome: Monday, December 9, 2024 (expected)
Award Start Date: January 1, 2025

RFP Contents and Outline

Guiding Principles and Funding Priorities for Multicampus Research Collaborations

Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives provide stimulus and cohesion for thematic topics important to UC and California and serve as a resource for the UC system. Proposed collaborations can be organized to carry out focused research efforts, to facilitate high levels of interdisciplinary collaboration and interaction that advance innovative research, or to provide competitive grants in important fields of research. Following guidance from a systemwide joint faculty-administration committee, MRPI awards should be directed to research that fulfills the following three principles:

1) Enhance UC's systemwide research capacity, influence, and advantage by providing access to the facilities, resources, and opportunities available across the UC system.
2) Enhance multicampus collaborations and foster multicampus engagement in order to achieve outcomes not available through (or duplicative of) a single campus and discipline.
3) Mutually benefit UC and California, its people, environment, and economy.

To fulfill these principles, MRPI funding is intended to support:
- Areas in which seed-funding could lead to future extramural funding, especially in areas where UC campuses are underfunded relative to other comparable research institutions;
- Areas that are underfunded by the government in relation to their perceived importance to the state or the nation; and
- Innovative or multidisciplinary research in emerging fields of study that could increase UC's research competitiveness.

All proposals, in both Program and Planning/Pilot categories, should include the following elements:
- Multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary research that is novel, compelling, and innovative;
- Collaboration of *at least* three UC campuses (additional eligible UC locations are encouraged);
- Genuine engagement and interaction of faculty and researchers across career stages;
- Meaningful research and training opportunities for graduate students; and
- Plans for obtaining extramural funding to support ongoing research activities beyond the award period.

The MRPI awards are intended to fund *unique* collaborations not otherwise supported at the systemwide level or by state funds. Collaborations that receive concurrent funding from _other_ UCOP systemwide programs or state funding designated for specific UC programs or administered by UCOP must disclose that support in their proposals, and that funding will be considered in the MRPI funding decision regardless of merit. Teams proposing research on the topic of microelectronics are strongly encouraged to apply to the targeted Lab Fees Research Program Request for Proposals, as that area of research will be deprioritized for MRPI funding this cycle.

Please review the specific scope and intent of each award type summarized below.

Planning/Pilot Awards: Scope and Intent

Award Duration: 1 or 2 years
Funding Request: $150,000/year maximum
Restrictions: Non-renewable award open to *new* multicampus research collaborations only.
    See Eligibility and Exclusions for additional restrictions.

Intent: To create or strengthen collaborative *research capacity* in novel or cutting-edge fields, for *new* inter-disciplinary, transdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary collaborations, or multicampus collaborations that have not previously received MRPI, Organized Research Unit (ORU), or Multicampus Research Unit (MRU) support. Successful proposals will demonstrate the impact and benefit of this novel multicampus collaboration for advancing UC's research mission and enterprise with a distinct benefit to California; provide detailed plans regarding the collaboration's research goals and activities; and clearly articulate goals and metrics for success within the award period.

Pilot/Planning Award proposals must articulate meaningful activities in the following areas:

- Faculty Collaboration and Graduate Student Research Opportunities: proposals should articulate collaborative approaches to ensure participation by researchers across institutions and career stages; meaningful graduate student engagement and opportunities for professional development; and efforts to include trainees whose backgrounds or perspectives are historically underrepresented in the research area.

- Research Benefits and Impact on UC and California: proposals should identify the specific benefits that are expected to be accrued by UC or California and the importance of the research to California.

Examples of Planning/Pilot awards could include (but are not limited to):
- Funding for pilot multicampus collaborative research projects, or to develop new databases, data sets or other research capacity that can be shared across the UC campuses to enhance novel research or launch new research directions;
- Funding to train and support graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in new multicampus inter-disciplinary research that will enhance UC's competitiveness in recruiting and retaining outstanding graduate students in novel fields; or
- Funding to convene new multicampus collaborators with cross-disciplinary perspectives in workshops aimed at launching novel research directions or seeding ongoing collaboration in targeted areas.

Program Awards: Scope and Intent

Award Duration: 2, 3, or 4 years
Funding Request: Judicious and commensurate with proposed scope and timeframe
Restrictions: Non-renewable award open to both new and established multicampus research collaborations
    See Eligibility and Exclusions for additional restrictions.

Intent: To stimulate novel and compelling multicampus or systemwide research. Program awards may support either new interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary collaborations that propose significant *new* contributions to advancing the UC systemwide research mission, or established multicampus endeavors that want to launch clearly distinct new initiatives, expand their collaborations into new areas, or bring in new UC collaborators and require systemwide funding to achieve these goals. Applicants in this category may be prior MRPI Planning/Pilot award recipients who are eligible to apply for a Program Award, pre-existing multicampus research collaborations that have not previously received MRPI funding and that wish to expand the scope of their activities, or new multicampus collaborations. Successful proposals will demonstrate the benefit of this collaboration for enhancing UC's research impact through cutting-edge scholarship, genuine multicampus engagement, comprehensive opportunities for graduate and undergraduate student support and training, inclusion of faculty across career stages, clearly defined public engagement, and distinct benefit to UC and California.
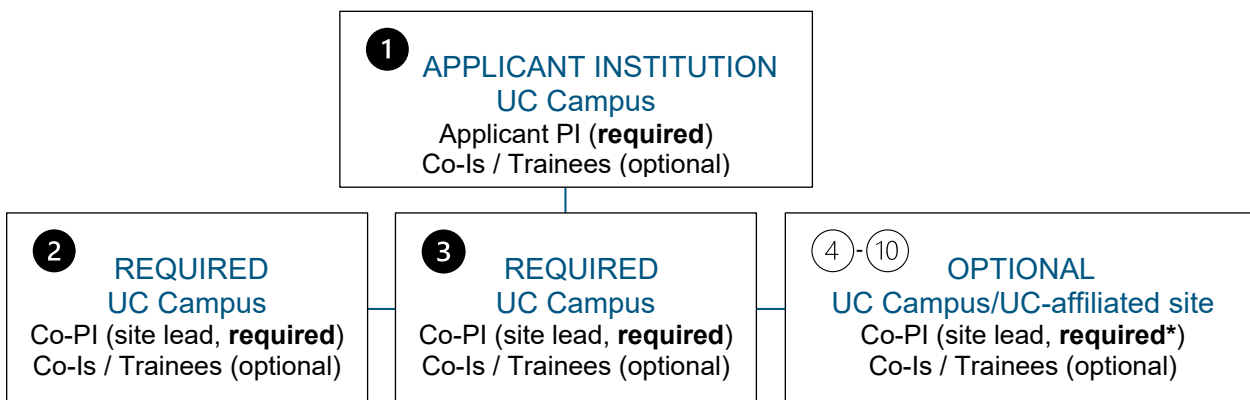
In addition to what is asked of Pilot/Planning Award proposals (see above), Program Award proposals must also articulate meaningful activities in the following areas:

- Public Engagement/Community Collaboration: proposals will engage Californians in the UC research mission in ways that include and impact diverse communities representative of California, particularly those historically underrepresented in the research area (details and examples provided in the FAQs).
- Contributions to Undergraduate Education or Curriculum: proposals should incorporate research activities that inform or transform curriculum, provide new opportunities for undergraduate participation in research, internships, or fieldwork.
- *For Program Award applications from established collaborations or previously funded MRPI Planning/Pilot awardees*: research sustainability and ability to leverage extramural support will also be evaluated. Continued reliance on systemwide support requires a compelling justification.

Explore abstracts from MRPI's currently funded projects for recent Planning/Pilot and Program awardees.

Structure of an MRPI Collaboration

MRPI proposals require the collaboration of at least three UC campuses and may also include additional collaborating sites within the UC system. Each site must have one and only one Principal Investigator (at the Applicant Institution) or Co-Principal Investigator (at the collaborating UC campuses/UC-affiliated sites). The diagram below shows the research team structure for MRPI awards. *Please see Eligibility and Exclusions for definitions and eligibility requirements of the research team members.*

❶ APPLICANT INSTITUTION
UC Campus
Applicant PI (**required**)
Co-Is / Trainees (optional)

❷ REQUIRED
UC Campus
Co-PI (site lead, **required**)
Co-Is / Trainees (optional)

❸ REQUIRED
UC Campus
Co-PI (site lead, **required**)
Co-Is / Trainees (optional)

④-⑩ OPTIONAL
UC Campus/UC-affiliated site
Co-PI (site lead, **required***)
Co-Is / Trainees (optional)

Each collaborating campus/location must identify one Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) as site lead

Eligibility and Exclusions

All proposals must conform to these eligibility and exclusion requirements. Adherence to these requirements will be reviewed at both the LOI and full proposal stages.

1. Applicant Institution Eligibility: Proposals must be submitted by the Contracts and Grants or Sponsored Projects Office of the identified Applicant UC campus. The Applicant Institution must be one of the ten UC campuses [Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara or Santa Cruz]. The Applicant Institution is responsible for award administration and research compliance.

2. Multicampus Collaborative Structure and Eligible Collaborating Sites: Both award types require the collaboration of at least three UC campuses and may also include additional collaborating sites within the UC system. These additional sites may include other UC campuses, one or more UC-affiliated national laboratories, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, any of the five UC medical centers, and UC Law San Francisco.

    Exclusions and Limitations: Proposed research collaborators from outside the UC system must identify the funding from other sources they will contribute to the project to support their participation in the proposed collaboration. Funding may not support personnel or activities at the UC Office of the President.

3. <u>Eligible Investigators and Project Roles</u>: Each proposal must identify <u>one</u> Applicant PI (the "PI") who holds principal investigator status at the Applicant Institution. The PI is responsible for the overall project coordination and research oversight. Each additional collaborating UC campus or site must identify one (and only one) Co-PI site lead (even if the Co-PI/site is not requesting funding). Each Co-PI must hold PI status at their UC campus/location. The Co-PIs are responsible for research oversight at their locations. For guidelines on PI status, contact your UC campus Office of Research, or refer to Section 1-530 of the [UC Contracts and Grants Manual.](#) Additional collaborating investigators (Co-Is) at the Applicant Institution or collaborating sites may be identified if they contribute substantively to the proposed research. Individuals with joint appointments at multiple UC locations (for example, a UC campus and a UC-affiliated national laboratory) must apply through the location of their primary appointment, as defined by the location at which they have 50% or more FTE. For individuals with multi-location appointments (MLAs), their primary appointment is typically the location through which they receive their salary and benefits.

   Each Co-PI **must submit a** *[Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)](#)* as part of the LOI application. The Applicant Institution, Applicant PI, collaborating sites and Co-PIs (site leads), as defined by this RFP, are core elements of the proposal and may not be modified after the LOI is approved. At full application you may identify additional sites and Co-PIs. Each added Co-PI **must submit** their own *[Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)](#)*.

   > *Exclusions and Limitations*: An individual may participate as key personnel (PI, Co-PI, or Co-I) in one and only one proposal submitted this competition round. To ensure broad participation of UC faculty in the MRPI funding opportunity, a PI, Co-PI, or Co-I on any concurrently funded MRPI award (i.e., current award end date after December 31, 2024) is ineligible to participate in a proposal. A PI or Co-PI funded by a UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program (LFRP) award that would overlap with the award period of the MRPI award is ineligible to serve as a PI or Co-PI on any MRPI award, and their inclusion as a Co-I in the proposal must be on a research topic clearly distinct from their LFRP funding. Academic personnel whose primary role is in university-wide, campus, or school administration above the level of Dean, or whose primary appointment is at the UC Office of the President, may not serve as PIs, Co-PIs, or other key personnel on any proposal.

4. <u>Eligibility by each Award Type</u>: *Please review the scope and intent of each award type described above.* MRPI awards are intended to fund *unique* collaborations not otherwise supported at the systemwide level. New collaborations are eligible to apply for either a Planning/Pilot Award or a Program Award. Established collaborations and previously funded MRPI Planning/Pilot award recipients with award end dates on or before December 31, 2024, may apply for funding in the category of Program Awards only.

   > *Exclusions and Limitations*: Planning/Pilot and Program Awards are non-renewable. Currently funded MRPI Planning/Pilot Award recipients with project end dates of December 31, 2024 or earlier that would like to expand their collaboration *must* apply in the Program Award category. Multicampus or systemwide research entities that receive funding from UCOP systemwide programs or state funds designated for specific UC programs or administered by UCOP on an ongoing or non-competed basis are ineligible to apply.

Allowable Costs and Budget Restrictions

1. <u>Allowable Costs and Budget Justification</u>: Proposal budgets may include *direct cost* expenditures that are incurred to directly support the proposed collaborative research activities only. Funding requests must be judicious and well-justified and must conform to the budget guidelines below and further detailed in the application instructions and templates. Proposal budgets should prioritize multicampus research activities and UC student and trainee engagement in the research. Please see detailed budget guidelines available with the full application for allowable personnel compensation. Non-allowable costs will be deducted from the funding request.

2. <u>Existing Support and New Activities</u>: The intent of this opportunity is to fund *new* research projects and collaborations. To ensure that funds target novel research efforts, all applicants must disclose all current and concurrent research funding from UCOP systemwide programs or state funds designated for specific

UC programs or administered by UCOP in the full proposal. Existing support will be considered as part of the decision-making process. *Program Award applicants please note:* applications from established collaborations or previously funded MRPI Planning/Pilot awardees requesting new funding will also be evaluated on the degree to which the proposal identifies novel directions, or distinct new activities, for ongoing research collaboration. Continued reliance on systemwide support requires a compelling justification regarding why extramural funding is unavailable or insufficient to meet the research needs.

3. <u>Non-Allowable Costs and Budget Restrictions</u>: Funding provided by this opportunity may not be used to cover patient care costs, clinical trials, patent execution costs, fundraising costs, subawards to non-UC-affiliated entities (except as may be required to support community engagement or participation) or indirect cost recovery.

Funding may not be requested to provide core institutional support, or to supplement funding for existing projects already supported by other systemwide funding from UCOP. Funding to cover new operational costs likely to extend beyond the award period is not allowed.

Proposals to purchase equipment or other research infrastructure located at only one or two campuses must include a comprehensive description of how the equipment or infrastructure will enhance research capacity and competitiveness across the UC system, be made accessible throughout UC, and be made available to a minimum of three campuses. Funding for equipment purchases or resources for which access is limited to only one or two campuses will not be considered.

Overview of Application and Review Process

We strongly encourage all applicants to begin the online LOI and application submission process early to allow adequate time to complete both the information required on the SmartSimple interface and required uploads. All submission deadlines are strictly enforced and late submissions will not be accepted.

<u>Letter of Intent Submission</u>: Applicants must submit a complete LOI using *SmartSimple* and no application may move forward without an approved LOI. The award type, Applicant Institution, Applicant PI, collaborating campuses and Co-PIs, as defined by this RFP, are core elements of the proposal and may not be modified after the LOI is approved. Each campus must identify one (and only one) Co-PI, and each Co-PI **must submit a** *Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)*.

<u>Advancement to Full Proposal</u>: Applicants with approved LOIs will be given access to the full application in *SmartSimple*. All proposals must be submitted in accordance with the instructions, templates, and guidelines provided, and must conform to the requirements of the final version of the RFP. *It is the applicants' responsibility to check the program website for updates, clarifications, or changes prior to submitting the full proposal.*

<u>Full Proposal Submission</u>: Applicants should prepare their proposals in language accessible to a general scientific audience and avoid jargon. Full proposals must be submitted by the UC Applicant Institution campus Contracts and Grants or Sponsored Projects Office. It is the PI's responsibility to follow campus rules, procedures, and timelines for submitting a proposal and to confirm that all Co-PIs have obtained institutional approval, if required, from the collaborating campuses and institutions in advance of proposal submission.

<u>Proposal Review and Selection</u>: UC Research Initiatives will manage a competitive peer review; scoring and ranking of proposals will be based on the criteria and requirements outlined in this RFP. Reviewers will be selected for their subject matter expertise and multidisciplinary panels will be composed of faculty and researchers drawn from both inside and outside of UC. Review assignments will be made to ensure a fair and balanced review and to address conflicts of interest. There will also be a comprehensive portfolio review spanning all fields to establish the balance of funding across the portfolio.

Final funding decisions and selection are at the discretion of the office of Research and Innovation in the UC Office of the President. Declined proposals may be submitted to future funding competitions without prejudice. All awards are contingent on availability of funding.

Letter of Intent: Content and Review

LOI submission instructions are available online in *SmartSimple* and attached in Appendix 3. Applicant teams must determine in advance whether they are applying for the Planning/Pilot Award or the Program Award and complete the appropriate LOI and application materials. An LOI Submission checklist is provided in Appendix 2.

Letter of Intent Content

The LOI includes the following required information:
1. Identification of the Applicant PI and Applicant Institution. Applicant PI information includes: name, academic title and appointment type; departmental affiliation; and biosketch/CV upload to the Project Personnel table.
2. Identification of each Co-PI and their corresponding UC campus or location (one and only one Co-PI per additional collaborating campus). Each Co-PI **must submit a** *Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)*, available also in *SmartSimple*. The completed and signed form must be attached to the Co-PI's biosketch/CV and uploaded to the Project Personnel table.
3. Proposal title and requested award term
4. Identification of primary subject and focus area(s)
5. Abstract summarizing the proposed scope of research and activities, expected impact or contributions to scholarship and California, and use of any specialized facilities or resources at each participating site relevant to the proposed activities. The abstract should be appropriate for a general scholarly audience and avoid disciplinary jargon or technical language specific to a single field. (2400 characters; approximately 350 words)
6. Brief text responses addressing programmatic and structural components of the proposal
7. Estimated funding request

Letter of Intent Review

LOIs will be evaluated based on their responsiveness to this RFP in three areas: 1) Eligibility and completeness; 2) Compliance with program requirements; and 3) Alignment with the program goals and funding priorities. Scholarly merit and research quality will not be evaluated at the LOI stage.

It is important to cross-check your LOI against the *Eligibility and Exclusions* section of the RFP prior to submission. All components of the LOI, **including the Applicant PI and each proposed Co-PI**, must individually and collectively meet all eligibility criteria for the LOI to be determined eligible and advanced to full proposal. No feedback or comments will be provided on the LOI, and the program decision is final and binding.

Full Proposal: Content, Review, and Selection

Once an LOI is advanced to full proposal, applicants will be able to access the full application materials in *SmartSimple*. Applicants may not change the award type, Applicant PI/Applicant Institution, or Co-PIs/collaborating sites after LOI submission. Complete applications must include all required application materials.

Full Proposal Content

All MRPI proposals (both award types) must use the templates provided. Components #1-9 are required for both award types. Optional letter(s) of commitment (#10) are allowed for both award types. Program Award proposals require three additional components (#11-13).

1. Abstract/Project Summary (textbox; 2400 characters): The LOI abstract will be prepopulated in the full application. Applicants may refine or update the abstract, but proposals that diverge significantly from the LOI such that they no longer meet the program guidelines may not be forwarded for review.

2. <u>Identification of Project Personnel</u>: The Applicant PI and Co-PIs will be prepopulated on the Project Personnel table. At full application you may identify additional collaborating sites and their Co-PI (site lead), each of whom **must submit** their own *[Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)](#)*. You may also identify additional *named* Co-Investigators (Co-Is), Postdoctoral fellows, or trainees at the Applicant Institution or at any of the participating campuses/sites. For all added personnel, include the name, department, UC/institutional email address, campus, and role on project. A biosketch/CV upload is required for the Applicant PI, each Co-PI, and the Co-Is. *Note*: biosketches/CVs are limited to 3 pages each. There is no template and you may use the standard format for your field or discipline (e.g., NSF, NIH biosketch, and other formats are acceptable). The 3 pages should include the information necessary for reviewers to determine whether the applicant has the relevant expertise to carry out the proposed research and should include only publications and other information that help make that case.

3. <u>Proposed Research</u> (5-page maximum, including tables and figures): Identify the specific aims, research activities, outcomes and scholarly contributions of the program or initiative, including the innovative and collaborative components that will advance scholarship in emerging fields, multi- or inter-disciplinary areas, or areas of strategic importance to UC. The narrative should describe the contribution of the proposed activities to advancing outstanding research, the likelihood of the research to position UC as a leader in the field or thematic area, how the proposed activities will enhance UC's competitiveness in attracting outstanding faculty and graduate students, and plans for obtaining extramural support for ongoing research activities beyond the award period.

4. <u>Faculty Collaboration and Graduate Student Research Opportunities</u> (~1 page): Justify the composition of the team and articulate how the collaboration and shared leadership opportunities will be integrated into the proposed project and activities to achieve the programmatic goals. Describe the collaborative research and training aspects of the proposal in relation to: 1) collaborative approaches that will ensure genuine engagement and participation by researchers across the campuses and collaborating partner institutions; 2) shared project leadership and opportunities for professional development across career and professorial ranks; 3) meaningful graduate student engagement and opportunities for professional development and progress towards degree; 4) efforts to include trainees whose backgrounds or perspectives are historically underrepresented in the research area.

Note: Proposals that request funding to offer competitive grants (subawards) to connect campus projects in a multicampus network must explain how this approach will leverage the impact of research across the system in an important area of research. If sub-allocations to individual recipients are proposed, the proposal must articulate how this use of systemwide funds enhances multicampus research and could not be better achieved through the funding of collaborative or multidisciplinary approaches.

5. <u>Research Benefits, Impact on UC and California, and Accountability</u> (~1/2 page): Describe the mechanisms and collaborative approaches that will ensure that the activities and outcomes of the collaboration have UC systemwide benefit and impact. Identify the specific benefits that are expected to be accrued by UC or California and the importance of the research to California. Benefits may include how the collaboration increases efficiency through common resources while stimulating the systemwide creative process and/or promoting new educational curricula. Applicants must include a description of the proposed governance or advisory structure to ensure multicampus benefit, accountability, and impact.

6. <u>Timeframe, Milestones and Evaluation Metrics</u> (~1/2 page): Identify the research timeline, benchmarks, and milestones, and justify how the proposed time period and requested budget will accomplish the milestones to make a significant impact in the field. Identify specific evaluation approaches and outcome metrics and include a description of the methods that will be used to evaluate the research and plan future research directions. To demonstrate research sustainability, include a description of how the program will either end or transition to non-UCOP funds at the completion of the funding period, as appropriate.

7. <u>Literature Cited</u> (2-page maximum): Identify the literature cited in the research narrative and proposed activities.

8. <u>Itemized Budget and Justification</u>: Provide a detailed budget, by project year and campus location, using the budget interface in *SmartSimple*. Collaborating campuses and UC-affiliated sites should enter their budgets as UC "subcontracts." Budget entries should be accompanied by brief line-item justifications in relation to the proposed

activities. See the detailed guidelines and instructions for Allowable and Non-Allowable costs provided with the full application instructions.

9. <u>Additional Documentation</u>: Additional required uploads include a) Identification of any human participants, animal use, or biohazard issues and the approach to compliance (template provided); b) Disclosure of all current or anticipated concurrent sources of UCOP systemwide research funds or state funds designated for specific UC programs or administered by UCOP, supporting this collaboration (template provided).

10. <u>Optional Letters of Commitment (3-page maximum)</u>: Letter(s) of commitment identifying specific campus resources (if any) that will be required to complete the proposed research. *Only letters identifying specific campus commitments dedicated to this proposal, not general letters of support, will be accepted.*

Items # 11-13 below apply to Program Awards only:

11. <u>Public Engagement and Community Collaboration</u> (~1 page; required): Describe the components for community participation or engagement with the research. As appropriate and tailored to the research activities or disciplines, public engagement may include community collaborative research, citizen science, community participation and educational outreach, or activities that demonstrate the value of UC research to the California public. Outline the anticipated benefits of the community collaboration/public engagement in relation to the research itself, or the anticipated public benefits of the research outcomes to California and the world. Possible examples of community engagement, not meant to be an exhaustive list, are included in the FAQs.

12. <u>Contributions to Undergraduate Education</u> (~1/2 page; required): Describe the specific activities or outcomes that will enhance undergraduate education at UC. These may include student participation in the research, summer internships, contributions to curriculum, or other components appropriate to the disciplinary and topical areas. (If summer training programs or internships for UC undergraduates are already in place, funding may be requested only to expand these activities in areas consistent with the proposed research, and not to fund the existing program, nor to cover non-UC student participation.)

13. <u>Prior Accomplishments</u> (~1/2 page; if applicable): Established multicampus collaborations that are requesting funding to launch new initiatives or expand their collaborations, or previously funded MRPI Planning/Pilot projects (with end dates on or before December 31, 2024) that are requesting new funding, must justify their request for additional systemwide support, and should address why prior systemwide funding has not led to sufficient extramural funding. This justification may include prior accomplishments of the collaboration and outline a compelling justification for continued funding. New collaborations do not need to fill out this section.

Full Proposal Review and Selection Criteria

Reviewers will assess criteria #1-4, below, and the additional considerations, in the scoring and ranking of all proposals. Additional scoring criteria #5-7 for required components apply explicitly to Program Awards.

1. <u>Research Excellence and Innovation</u>: Highest quality research in compelling topics that create or strengthen UC's research capabilities to advance scholarship, training, and knowledge, particularly in areas of strategic importance. Successful proposals clearly demonstrate the potential of the scholarship to position UC and its faculty as innovative leaders addressing topics and problems that impact California, the nation, and the world. Excellence also includes likelihood of impact in the fields or thematic areas identified in the proposal, and feasibility of achieving the goals and outcomes in the award period. Innovation may be demonstrated by interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary scholarship at the cutting edge of two or more fields or proposed theoretical or applied breakthroughs in important areas of scholarship or innovative technology.

2. <u>Strength of the Collaboration and Systemwide Impact and Benefits</u>: Evaluation of the impact and benefits to the UC system of the proposed collaboration will consider the quality and extent of:
- Genuine engagement and interaction of faculty, researchers, and graduate students from three or more campuses or national labs and from across career stages and perspectives;

- Interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary collaboration that stimulates systemwide creative processes, and provides access to the best available resources, infrastructure or facilities;
- Likelihood activities will enhance UC's competitiveness in attracting and retaining faculty and graduate students, garnering awards, prizes, honors and/or extramural funding, and other contributions that help position UC for strategic excellence; and
- A governance structure that ensures a balanced opportunity for participation across UC, and/or through increased efficiency as a result of common facilities or administrative support.

3. Importance and Benefit to California: Assessment of the importance of the proposed research to California and the potential for the proposed activities or research outcomes to benefit California or its people in one or more of the following areas: inform policy, identify novel solutions to important problems, and/or provide economic, social, cultural, environmental or other benefits.

4. Quality of Graduate Student Engagement and Training: Assessment of the extent and quality of meaningful engagement by graduate or professional students in innovative research and cutting-edge scholarship, including efforts to involve trainees whose backgrounds or perspectives are historically underrepresented in the research area, as demonstrated by graduate student support, participation in key research activities and opportunities that advance them towards their degree and successful professional careers.

Additional Considerations: The following four additional factors will be considered in evaluating all proposals:
  a. Appropriateness and judiciousness of the proposed budget to achieve proposal aims in the award period, and efficient use of funds;
  b. Sufficient campus commitment and administrative capacity to support the proposed activities;
  c. Other sources of support, and plans to secure extramural support, if available, to make the multicampus collaboration self-supporting; and
  d. Issues or concerns related to human participants, animal use, or biohazards.

Criteria # 5-7 apply explicitly to Program Awards. *Activities in these areas may strengthen proposals in the Planning/Pilot Award category but are not required components.*

5. Public Engagement/Community Collaboration: Projects should engage Californians in the UC research mission in ways that are meaningful to and benefit the research endeavor and provide community benefit. Successful proposals will include and impact diverse communities representative of California, particularly those historically underrepresented in the research area. Approaches may include but are not limited to community-based participatory research, citizen science, K-12 education and outreach, or other public engagement appropriate to the research scope and activities. The creation of a community advisory board alone, or enrollment of human research subjects, is not sufficient to demonstrate meaningful community engagement for the purpose of this award.

6. Contributions to Undergraduate Education or Curriculum: Proposals should incorporate research activities that inform or transform curriculum, provide new opportunities for undergraduate participation in research, internships, or fieldwork appropriate to the fields and disciplines of the proposal. Strong proposals will launch new activities consistent with the proposed research and demonstrate the impact on education and training of a future generation of scholars and engaged citizens.

7. Research Sustainability and Ability to Leverage Extramural Support: Program Award applications from established collaborations or previously funded MRPI Planning/Pilot awardees requesting new funding will also be evaluated on the degree to which the proposal identifies novel directions, or distinct new activities, for ongoing research collaboration. Continued reliance on systemwide support requires a compelling justification regarding why extramural funding is unavailable or insufficient to meet the research needs.

Funding decisions will result from a competitive peer review of submitted proposals. Recommendations from the review panels will be prioritized by the portfolio panel to establish the balance of funding across the portfolio. Final funding decisions and selection are at the discretion of the office of Research and Innovation in the UC Office of the President. Declined proposals may be submitted to future funding competitions without prejudice.

Research Program Oversight and Contacts

The MRPI funding opportunity is administered by UC Research Initiatives (UCRI) in the Research Grants Program Office at the UC Office of the President. This funding opportunity is among several offered by UCRI.

Awards are contingent on availability of funding and compliance with all research and reporting requirements. Funded proposals are required to submit annual progress and fiscal reports as well as a project outcomes report after the conclusion of the award period. Future-year funding (beyond the initial payment of selected awards) is contingent on ongoing systemwide funding of the Multicampus Research Program. Funded proposals will be assigned to a UCRI program officer who will serve as the primary program contact.

Please direct questions to the following contacts:

For questions related to program priorities or scope of proposals, contact UCRI@ucop.edu.

For administrative questions regarding the application process or technical questions regarding the use of *SmartSimple*, contact RGPOGrants@ucop.edu.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions
  Provides additional guidance and examples for applicants

Appendix 2: LOI Submission Checklist
  Supplemental checklist to assist applicants at the time of LOI submission

Appendix 3: Instructions for Submission of Letters of Intent
  Provides detailed steps for LOI preparation and submission

Appendix 4: Other RGPO Policies and Pre-Award Requirements
  Provides compliance guidelines that will be required of all proposals nominated for funding

UC Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Version Dated: March 20, 2024

Updated Program Announcements, FAQs, and RFP clarifications (if any) will be posted on the UC Research Initiatives ([UCRI](#)) website. To ensure proposals meet all program requirements, PIs and their collaborators are strongly encouraged to check the website for any program updates prior to full proposal submission.

Please refer to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2025 awards for program requirements.

This is a supplement to the Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives RFP and is intended to provide additional guidance to applicants. Based on questions we receive it may be updated periodically. Applicants are responsible for checking the UC Research Initiatives ([UCRI](#)) website for updates.

Eligibility and Collaborative Structure

1. **How many collaborators are required for a proposal?**
   Each proposal must have a minimum of one Applicant PI and two Co-PIs, each from a different UC campus. In addition to participation from the three campuses, proposals may include additional Co-Investigators (Co-Is) from the same UC campus, additional Co-PIs each from a different UC campus, or from other systemwide research entities. Examples of other systemwide collaborators include researchers from any of the UC-affiliated national laboratories, the UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, any of the five UC medical centers, and UC Law San Francisco. (*Note:* UC medical centers are not considered to be separate locations/sites from the other schools or colleges at their campus.) Each proposal includes one and only one Applicant PI, and one and only one Co-PI with PI status at their home institution from each *additional* collaborating location. Additional collaborators who make significant contributions to the research may be identified as Co-Investigators.

2. **I have several collaborators who will make equal intellectual contributions to the project. Can I identify more than one Co-PI at the same campus?**
   The intent of the MRPI is to encourage broad participation in multicampus research contributing diverse perspectives and expertise. The role of the Co-PI specifically is to serve as the site lead responsible for administration and oversight of the award at each participating institution. Therefore, each campus may have one and only one designated PI/Co-PI. For the Applicant Institution, this is the Applicant PI. For each additional campus, there can be one and only one Co-PI. Additional collaborators at participating institutions may be added as Co-Is, or other appropriate project titles.

3. **I am involved in a current MRPI award that extends past December 31, 2024, but I do not charge effort to that award. Can I be involved in a proposal?**
   No. If you are key personnel (PI, Co-PI, or Co-I) on a current MRPI award with an end date after December 31, 2024, you are not eligible to participate in a new proposal, regardless of whether or not you charge effort to the award.

4. **Are researchers from Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, Lawrence Livermore National Lab, or Los Alamos National Lab eligible to apply?**
   MRPI proposals require the collaboration of at least three UC campuses and may also include additional collaborating sites within the UC system. The Applicant PI must have PI status at one of the ten UC campuses. Researchers from any of the three UC-affiliated national labs may serve as the PI only if they have PI status at a UC campus and apply through that UC campus. See [Eligibility and Exclusions](#) for information related to joint appointments. UC national lab scientists who do not have PI status at a UC campus may serve as a national lab Co-PI or Co-I. Please note that indirect cost recovery is not allowed as part of MRPI awards.

5. **I work for the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. How can I participate in this collaborative research opportunity?**
MRPI proposals require the collaboration of at least three UC campuses and may also include additional collaborating sites within the UC system. The Applicant PI must have PI status at one of the ten UC campuses. An ANR employee may participate as a Co-PI on an MRPI award by collaborating with faculty on any of the 10 campuses who can serve as the Applicant PI for the proposal. To participate as a Co-PI, you must have PI status (consult the [ANR website](#) for eligible ANR titles/information on how to request an exception).

6. **The RFP mentions faculty collaboration across career stages. Does that mean we must have one PI or Co-PI at each level of the ladder-rank to be eligible?**
No. Participation in the proposal is not limited to ladder-rank or Academic Senate-eligible appointments (see the [Eligibility and Exclusions](#) section of the RFP), and there is no required team composition for the proposal. The intent of the faculty collaboration requirement is to encourage faculty and researchers at all levels to collaborate and to provide mentorship and leadership opportunities for early-career faculty in multicampus research. The composition of the team is at the discretion of the collaborators and should be one that positions the project for success. The proposal should describe how the goal of meaningful faculty collaboration across career stages will be realized within the context of their proposed activities and research scope.

7. **Can non-UC researchers collaborate on an MRPI project?**
The intent of this funding opportunity is to catalyze UC multicampus and systemwide collaboration and to leverage the distributed excellence of the UC system. UC PIs must lead the collaborations and should find experts across the UC system with whom to collaborate. Community partners from within California may participate as part of the public/community engagement components. In rare cases, if technical expertise, resources, or facilities are unavailable at any UC campus or UC-affiliated national lab, the PI may request funds for a service contract to obtain specific services or expertise from outside UC (but within California). This request must be accompanied by an explanation about why the expertise or facilities cannot be identified within UC. If research collaborators from outside the UC system are proposed, the application must identify the funding from other sources they will contribute to the project to support their participation in the proposed collaboration.

Funding Restrictions and Other Sources of Support:

8. **I previously received a MRPI Planning/Pilot Award, and now I want to request a new Planning/Pilot award this cycle with a different collaborative team. Do I have to apply in the Program Award category?**
If your current funding ends by December 31, 2024, and you want to launch a new collaboration in a new topic area with a new team of collaborators, you may apply again in the Planning/Pilot category. However, there cannot be topical overlap with the previously funded project. If you want to extend the existing collaboration with additional partners or an expanded scope, then you should apply for the Program Award.

9. **Our multicampus collaboration receives systemwide funding from other (non-MRPI) sources. Can we also apply for MRPI funding to undertake a special project?**
The intent of this funding opportunity is to support *unique* collaborations across a broad portfolio of University research and scholarship, and to launch new collaborations in path-breaking thematic or topical areas that may position them for extramural support. Multicampus collaborations or systemwide research entities that receive ongoing or non-competed UCOP systemwide funding or state funding designated for specific UC programs or administered by UCOP are ineligible to apply. Multicampus collaborations that receive competed or term-limited grant funding from other UCOP systemwide sources may apply for MRPI funding for a distinct and unique research undertaking but receive lower priority regardless of scientific merit. All sources of UCOP systemwide funding or state funding designated for specific UC programs or administered by UCOP must be disclosed, and funding overlap or support for ongoing operational activities is not allowed.

10. **My MRPI Planning/Pilot award has an end date of December 31, 2024, but I expect the project to have remaining funds beyond the current end date. Can I submit a proposal for a new award in this competition?**

    If you have a current MRPI Planning/Pilot award with an end date on or before December 31, 2024 at the time of full proposal submission, you are eligible to apply as long as you meet all of the other eligibility criteria. *However, you may not receive concurrent funding.* Therefore, if your proposal is nominated for funding, you will have to provide a full accounting of all expenditures on your current award and return unexpended funds before a new award can be approved. Details will be provided in the pre-award notification.

LOI and Proposal Submission and Application Guidelines:

11. **Does the Letter of Intent need to be submitted through the campus Sponsored Projects or Contracts & Grants Office?**

    No. Unlike full proposals, LOIs do not need to be submitted through the C&G/SPO. A signature from an institutional signing official is not required for LOI submission.

12. **My LOI was accepted, and our team was approved to submit a full proposal. Is the LOI binding or can we make changes?**

    The LOI must accurately present your entire proposed collaboration and activities, research topic and approximate total budget, and full proposals should fall within the scope of the original LOI. Updates, refinements, and adjustments may be made to the proposed scope, abstract, and activities when the full proposal is submitted. The award type, Applicant Institution, Applicant PI, collaborating campuses and Co-PIs, are core elements of the proposal and may not be modified after the LOI is approved. However, at full application you may identify additional collaborating sites and their Co-PI (site lead), each of whom **must submit** their own *Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)*. You may also identify additional *named* Co-Investigators (Co-Is), Postdoctoral fellows, or trainees at the Applicant Institution or at any of the participating campuses/sites.

13. **Do we need to submit a letter of support from the Applicant Institution Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR) as part of the application?**

    No. Proposals must be submitted by the Applicant Institution's Sponsored Projects or Contracts & Grants Office, and this serves as documentation of the VCR's approval. Letters of general support will not be accepted. Letters of commitment of campus resources may be included in cases where the use of or access to a lab/resource/facility may be limited or require permission or concurrence from a decision-maker for that resource or facility.

Award Amounts and Budget Requests:

14. **Can you provide any guidance on what size budget request would be considered reasonable for each award type?**

    We anticipate approximately $16 million total funding for new awards across both award types for this cycle. Budgets in both categories should be *judicious and well justified* in relation to the proposed activities and potential impact, demonstrate efficient use of funds, and include a justification that demonstrates knowledge of the reasonable and necessary costs to ensure success of the proposed activities. This means that some budget requests *in either award category* may reasonably request less than the $150,000 annual maximum allowed for Planning/Pilot Awards. The median annual award amount in the Program award category is approximately $395,000. These data are provided as general information only, and funding requests will be considered in relation to their reasonableness and justification. Funding decisions and award ranges are based on the merit and ranking of the proposals, overall portfolio distribution, and the degree to which meritorious proposals fulfill the overall program priorities and goals.

15. **Can MRPI funds be used to support undergraduate students as well as graduate students?**

    Funding may be used to engage students in research training, internship activities, or other educational or curricular enhancement related to the project scope and topic. Award funds may not be used for student financial aid or general education activities.

Other Proposal Components:

16. **What kind of research activities are expected for undergraduates in these proposals?**
    A required component of the Program Award is to identify specific contributions to undergraduate education through the research endeavor. This requirement may take many forms as appropriate to the research scope, activities, and expected impact. Some examples include (but are not limited to) active participation in the data collection or analysis itself, training, internship or fieldwork opportunities, or enhancements to undergraduate curriculum. The collaborative team should propose activities or components that will be both meaningful and likely successful within the context of the type of research proposed.

17. **What is meant by public/community engagement in the proposal requirements, and what kinds of activities would fulfill this goal?**
    A key component of the Program Award is to catalyze California's public engagement in the UC research mission. Depending on the type of research, this component can take various forms, and the opportunities for public engagement and community benefit should be appropriate to the research scope and topic. The most effective and meaningful activities will be those that are well-integrated into, and strengthen the quality of, the research effort while also advancing the education and service missions of the University. For more information, please refer to Review Criterion 5 in the Review and Selection Criteria section of the RFP.

    We offer examples of community participation and public engagement for illustration purposes only. This is neither an exhaustive nor a prioritized list. *Please explore the [funded research database](#) for more examples.*
    - Involvement or participation of K-12 California schools or community groups in ecological data-gathering, urban gardens, nutrition programs, or similar activities related to the scope of the research
    - Education and outreach activities connecting the California public to museums, archives, observatories, or historical sites with research relevance
    - Agricultural extension activities that create new education and outreach services to communities as a function of the proposed research
    - Engaging communities in local problem-solving, urban or community planning, or after-school research-enhanced enrichment opportunities
    - Activities aimed at engaging *new*, hard-to-reach, or underserved populations in research-related health education, cooperative extension, or other research-informed community benefit. (Funding must support new activities or communities relevant to the research and may not provide core support for existing programs or services.)

    Important additional requirements and considerations for community engagement:

    Note on Data Analysis and Integrity: If the public is involved in generating or analyzing research data, the full proposal should explain how the collaboration will ensure the integrity of the data and improve the quality of the research or strengthen the analysis, as appropriate.

    Note on Human Participants: Please note that enrollment of human research subjects or the delivery of patient care does *not* constitute public engagement for the purposes of this opportunity, and clinical trials research may not be proposed. Human research subjects whose participation is primarily (or limited to) providing survey data, biological specimens, or other data for the purposes of the scientific analysis do not constitute community collaborators.

    Note on Community Advisory Boards: Community advisory boards may enhance research engagement and community benefit, and therefore constitute a component of your proposed public engagement activities. However, the convening of these boards alone, without additional active public or community engagement in the research, or research-related education or outreach activities, is unlikely to provide sufficient evidence of meaningful community engagement for the purposes of this award.

Appendix 2:

UC Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives LOI Submission Checklist
Version Dated: March 20, 2024

Please refer to the 2025 MRPI Request for Proposals for the program goals and eligibility requirements for the Planning/Pilot Awards and the Program Awards. The FAQs provide additional guidance. As a first step in the application process, a complete LOI must be submitted by the LOI deadline. This supplemental checklist is intended to assist applicants in ensuring their LOI submission is complete.

☐   The intended award type (Planning/Pilot or Program) is selected.

☐   The Applicant PI has completed all the required fields on the *SmartSimple* MRPI LOI interface.

☐   The Project Personnel Table lists the Applicant PI and identifies his/her/their UC campus as the Applicant Institution, and the Applicant PI's biosketch/CV is uploaded in the Project Personnel Table.

☐   The Applicant PI holds PI status at their UC campus and verification of PI Status, if required, is included with the biosketch/CV in the Project Personnel Table.

☐   One and only one Co-PI is identified at each <u>additional</u> participating UC campus/location and their information is listed in the Project Personnel Table.

☐   A minimum of three UC campuses, including the Applicant Institution, is identified in the LOI. (A three-campus collaboration would include one Applicant PI and two Co-PIs).

☐   The required *Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)* is uploaded with the biosketch/CV for <u>each</u> Co-PI in the Project Personnel Table. Each Co-PI must hold PI status at their UC campus/location and verification of PI status, if required, is included with the biosketch/CV in the Project Personnel Table.

☐   All key personnel (PI, Co-PI, Co-I) identified on the LOI are participating in one and only one LOI in this MRPI competition cycle.

Appendix 3:

UC Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives Letter of Intent Submission Instructions Planning/Pilot Awards and Program Awards
Version Dated: March 20, 2024

Please refer to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2025 awards for program requirements.
This is a supplement to the Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives RFP and is intended to provide additional guidance and technical support to applicants. Based on questions we receive, it may be updated periodically. Applicants are responsible for checking the UC Research Initiatives ([UCRI](#)) website for updates.

The University of California (UC) office of Research and Innovation is pleased to provide applicant instructions for submission of a Letter of Intent for the [UC Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives](#) funding opportunity announced on March 20, 2024. Submission and approval of a Letter of Intent (LOI) is required to submit a full proposal. LOIs must be submitted **by May 16, 2024 before 12:00 noon Pacific Time in the *SmartSimple* System**. We encourage early submission of LOIs. Please note: LOIs will not be accepted after the deadline.

UCRI uses a grants management system called *SmartSimple*. Please use the following instructions to submit an LOI before the deadline above.

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE LOI SUBMISSION PROCESS
The LOI must be submitted through *[SmartSimple](#)* at https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/. Applicants may submit LOIs via the online system any time between March 20, 2024 and May 16, 2024. The LOI submission must be **completed** (not merely initiated) by the May 16, 2024 12:00 noon PT deadline.

Step 1: Applicant Registration with *SmartSimple*
Applicant Principal Investigators (PIs) must register as users of *SmartSimple* to submit an LOI and complete a proposal at https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/.

All Users Accessing *SmartSimple* for the First Time:
1. When accessing *SmartSimple* for the first time, all users should click the "**Register Here**" button under "**Principal Investigator Registration**" and follow the instructions to enter your institution, name, and contact information.
2. Each UC campus has one institution in the system; be sure to search for "University of California" to find their listings.
3. If you need to change the institution that your account is associated with, please contact us.
4. Your user account will then be created. You will receive an email with instructions to create a password and complete your account profile. Once you have completed this step, skip to Step 2: LOI Preparation and Submission.
5. If you see a pop-up message indicating that an account with your email address already exists, return to the main login page (https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/), and click the "**Forgot Password**" link. You will receive an email with a link and instructions to reset your password. **If you do not receive the password reset email within one hour, please contact us using the contact information at the end of this document. Make sure to check your spam or junk folder.**

Returning Users: Applicants who have previously registered with *SmartSimple* or are returning to

complete an in progress LOI should enter their username and password under "**Login**" and click the "**Login**" button on the *SmartSimple* homepage.
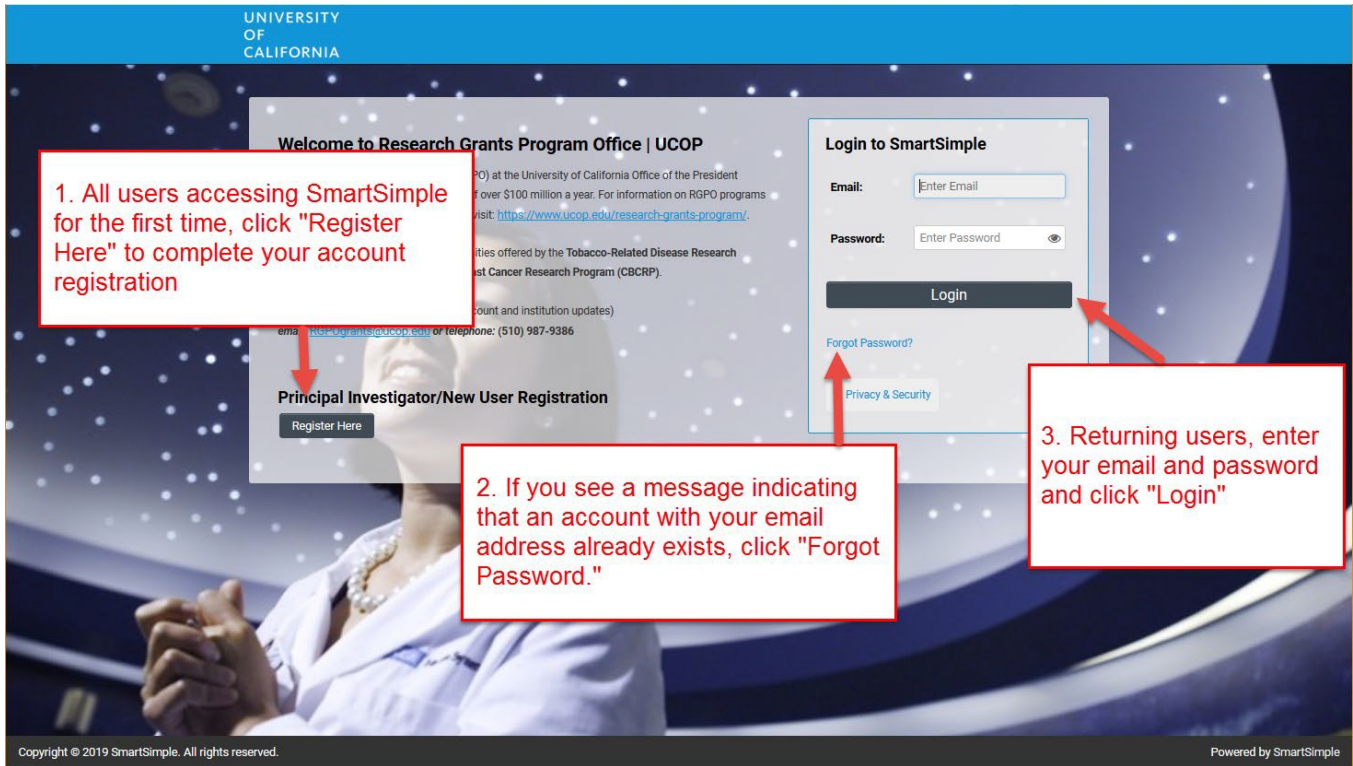

Step 2: LOI Preparation and Submission

1. Once logged into the system, click on "**Available Funding Opportunities**" (upper right corner).
2. Find the row for the award type you are interested in (MRPI Planning/Pilot or Program), then click "**Apply.**" You will then be taken to the Eligibility Check.
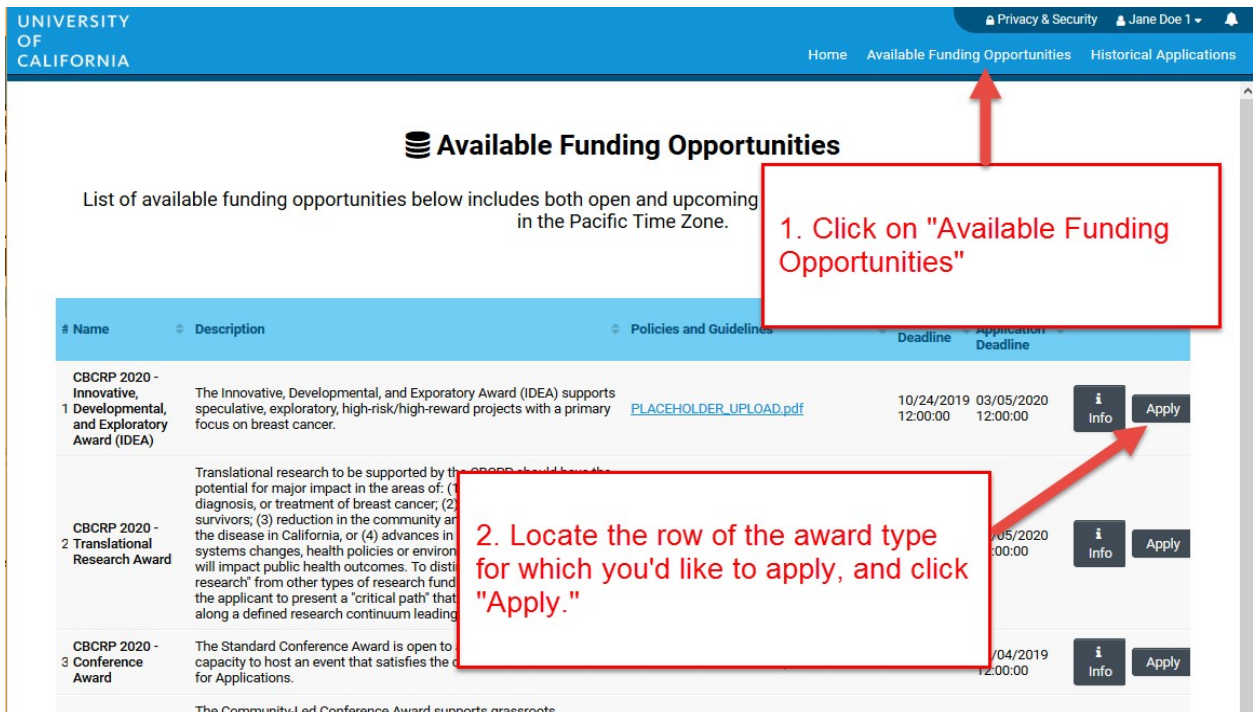
3. Complete the Eligibility Check and click **"Submit."**
   - The Eligibility Check contains a series of questions and statements regarding applicant eligibility. You must provide an answer to acknowledge that you meet all eligibility criteria mentioned. Upon submitting a "Yes" response, you will be able to start the LOI process. If your answer is "No," you are not eligible to apply.

4. Review the Helpful Tips and click **"Continue"** to begin your LOI.

5. Once in the LOI interface, you will see two options on the left sidebar: Main and Notes.
   - <u>**Main:**</u> Click this tab to access each section of the LOI. Detailed instructions for each section are provided below.
   - <u>**Notes:**</u> Click this tab to create Notes for your LOI. Click **"+"** to add a new Note. Any Notes stored here are for the applicant's reference only and will not be reviewed by program staff. Please make sure to include all relevant project information in the LOI sections under the Main tab.

6. In the "**Main**" tab, complete each section of the LOI and submit by the deadline. Please see below for detailed descriptions of each section. Note: Be sure to save your work often by clicking **"Save Draft."** You can access your LOI in later visits for additional work by selecting **"Open"** under **"In Progress Applications"** on the Home screen.
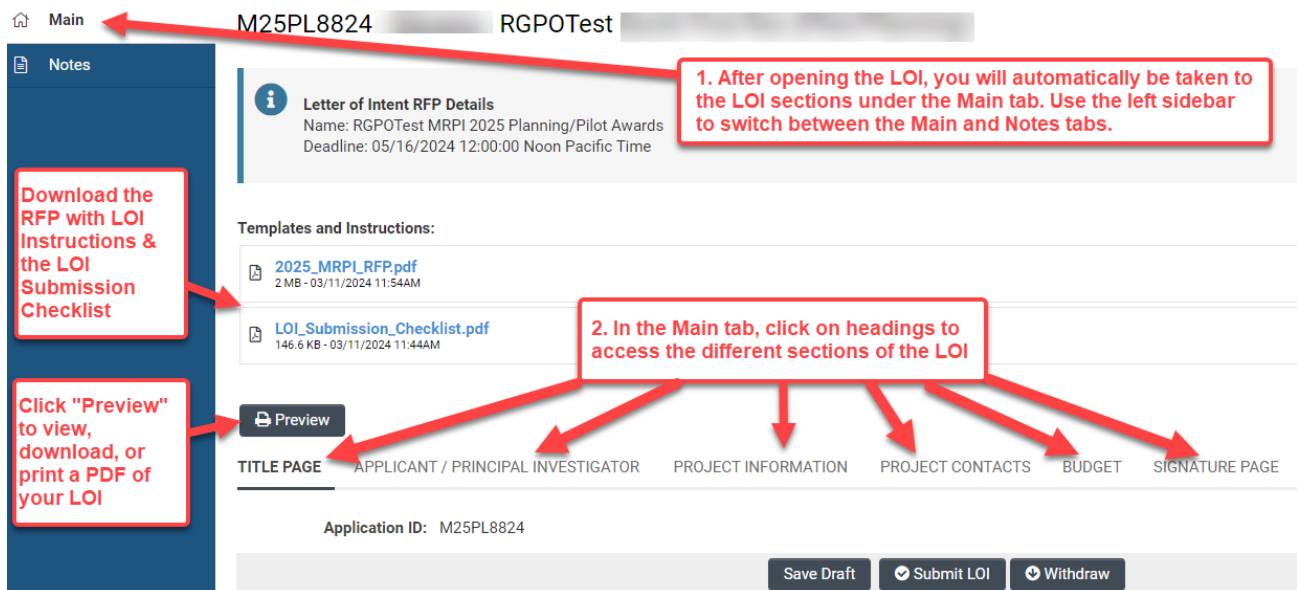
STEP BY STEP: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH LOI SECTION

1. Additional details for each section of the online LOI submission form are provided below. To begin the LOI, please select **Apply** from the **"Available Funding Opportunities"** page; if you have already started an LOI select the **"Home"** page and the **"In Progress Applications"** tile.
2. The LOI sections: **Title Page, Applicant/Principal Investigator, Project Information, Project Contacts, Budget, and Signature Page,** can be completed in any order and in any number of sessions prior to the deadline. You can move between sections by clicking directly on the section headings, or by clicking the "NEXT >" text at the bottom of the screen. Required fields are denoted with a red asterisk (*****). **Note:** Please be sure to save your work periodically or after each entry.

3. As you move through each section using the horizontal navigation bar, instructions are always available for download at the top of the page.
4. Click the **"Preview"** button at any time to view, download, or print a PDF version of your LOI.

LOI Section: Title Page
- **Project Title:** Please enter the project title here (100 characters or fewer including spaces).
- **Project Duration (Years):** Using the drop-down menu, select the duration of the project. Refer to the RFP for the options for each award type.
- **Project Start Date:** The project start date for both Planning/Pilot and Program Awards is January 1, 2025.
- **Project End Date:** Please enter the project end date here, based on the number of years requested.
- **Applicant PI UC Academic Appointment Title Group**: Please select Academic Appointment title here. Please consult Section 1-530 of the [UC Contracts and Grants Manual](#) for Principal Investigator appointment eligibility.
- **Applicant PI percent time on UC payroll at one of the ten UC Campuses**: Please indicate the applicable percent effort category.
- **Prior/Concurrent Funding**: Please answer the questions regarding previous and current funding. If "Yes' is selected on any of the questions, an additional text box will appear for you to provide more information.
- **Confirmation proposed collaboration meets eligibility requirements**: Provide confirmation you have reviewed the RFP and verified that the proposed collaboration, Applicant PI, and each Co-PI individually and collectively meet the eligibility requirements.

LOI Section: Applicant/Principal Investigator
Applicant/Principal Investigator information will be auto-populated from the "My Profile" section of your *SmartSimple* account. Please review this section for accuracy. To make changes to this information, click on your name in the upper right corner of the page, and select "My Profile." Save your changes. Return to the LOI by selecting **"Home"** in the upper right corner of the screen, and then the "In Progress Applications" tile. You can also go directly to the "My Profile" page in your account to make changes at any time.

LOI Section: Project Information
- <u>**Lay Abstract:**</u> In the textbox provided, concisely summarize the proposed project. This abstract is limited to 2,400 characters including spaces (approximately 350 words) and should be written in a manner that is appropriate for a general scholarly audience. Information must be entered as text only (scientific notations, special characters, fonts, and other rich-text formatting cannot be saved or displayed). The text will automatically wrap: carriage returns should be used for the start of a new paragraph but should NOT be used at the end of each line. The abstract is non-confidential and may be published or circulated by the Program. An abstract is required.
- <u>**LOI Questions:**</u> Please briefly summarize how your proposed collaboration addresses each of the following components. LOIs will be reviewed for compliance with the eligibility criteria and will be prioritized based on adherence to program goals and funding priorities. Please refer to the RFP for additional guidance. Information must be entered as text only (scientific notations, special characters, fonts, and other rich text formatting cannot be saved or displayed).

FOR BOTH AWARD TYPES (PLANNING/PILOT AND PROGRAM):	
Briefly justify the faculty team and composition of the multicampus collaboration. Summarize how shared leadership opportunities will be integrated in the project, as well the use of shared resources, if any.	Limit Response to 1,000 characters (~150 words).
Briefly describe the importance and benefit of the proposed research to California and/or the University of California.	Limit Response to 1,000 characters (~150 words).
FOR PLANNING/PILOT ONLY:	
Summarize the components of and approach to graduate student engagement in the project.	Limit Response to 1,000 characters (~150 words).
FOR PROGRAM AWARDS ONLY:	
Summarize the approach to graduate and undergraduate engagement in the research, and components of the project that will enhance education or curricula.	Limit Response to 1,000 characters (~150 words).
Summarize the components of public engagement and/or community collaboration, including any specific groups, organizations, or roles, in the proposed project.	Limit Response to 1,000 characters (~150 words).

- **Review Area:** Select the review area that most closely aligns with the proposal.
- **Subject Area(s):** Select the subject area(s).
- **Focus Area(s):** Start typing a character and choose your project's focus area(s) from the drop-down menu.
- **Suggested Reviewers:** (Optional) UC Research Initiatives will assemble the panels, assign reviewers, and make final determinations regarding panel composition. You may suggest qualified individuals for our consideration who could provide reviews of your full proposal without conflicts of interest. Please list the name, email address, and affiliation of reviewers. In addition, you may identify scholarly peers who you do not want to review your proposal. Click the "Enter Suggested Reviewer" button to list individuals in either category.
  - o Recommendations: In the "Notes" column, please indicate that this is a recommendation.
  - o Exclusions: You may identify scholarly peers who you do not want to review your proposal. In the "Notes" column, please indicate that this is an exclusion. Such requests MUST include a brief explanation of the perceived conflict of interest in the "Notes" column.
  - o Final determination of review assignments is at the discretion of the Program. All requests to include or exclude reviewers are confidential.

LOI Section: Project Contacts

- **Project Personnel:** At the LOI stage, you must enter the Applicant Principal Investigator of the project, and the Co-PI site lead for each collaborating campus/institution site lead. Click **"Enter Project Personnel."** A separate window will open. Using the **"+"** button, enter the names and details of the PI and Co- PI site leads. For each entry, you must provide the full ranked title the person assumes at his/her institution (e.g., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor). List only one Co-PI per participating site – do not include other collaborating investigators or other grant personnel on the LOI.
    - **Role on Project**: For each personnel, select their role on the project from the drop-down list. At the LOI stage, only include personnel with the Role of Applicant Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator.
    - **Institution Type:** Select "Academic/Research Institution" for each personnel from a UC campus or UC-affiliated site, including UC-affiliated national laboratories.
    - **PI/Co-PI column**: Disregard this column.
    - Click **"Save"** to save your changes. Click **"Close"** to return to the Project Contacts tab and **"Save Draft."**

<u>Upload Personnel Biosketches</u>: On the Project Contacts tab, a button will appear to upload a biosketch/CV for the PI and Co-PIs. Each Co-PI (collaborating Campus/Institution site lead) should complete a *Co-PI Eligibility Form (download)* (which can also be found above the Project Personnel table), attach it to their biosketch/CV, and upload here. When uploading a biosketch, please use the "print to PDF" functionality if using an NSF or other fillable PDF template. ***Note: Please make sure that your uploaded PDFs are not password protected; if they contain electronic signatures, please "print to PDF" before uploading. Tip:* Click "Save Draft" to display a link to the biosketch that you uploaded.**

❯ Project Personnel

One Co-PI Eligibility Form is required for each Co-PI:
Co-PI Eligibility Form

👥 Enter Project Personnel

1. Click "Enter Project Personnel" to open a new window that will allow you to enter all Personnel involved in your project.

2. Once you have entered all Personnel, return to the contacts page on the application to see a display of all Project Personnel. Then "Save Draft."

3. Click "Upload" to upload the biosketch of the person named in the first row. Repeat the biosketch upload process for each Personnel row.

4. Click "Save Draft" to display a link to the biosketch that you uploaded.

First Name	Last Name	Email Address	Degrees	Title	Department	Institution	Role on Project	Institution Type	PI/Co-PI	Upload Biosketch	Biosketch
Hi	Hello	hi@hello.edu	PhD	Professor	Oncology	UC San Diego	Applicant Principal Investigator	Academic/Research Institution	Hi Hello	Upload	Test_File_Biosketch_for_SmartSimple_Testing.pdf
Joe	Smith	testing@ucmm.edu	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry	UC Mercy Merced	Co-Principal Investigator	Academic/Research Institution	Hi Hello	Upload	Biosketch_for_Co-PI_with_Eligiblity_Form_(test).pdf

LOI Section: Budget

- **<u>Amount Requested:</u>** Enter the estimated total amount requested for each year of the proposed project. Click **"Save Draft,"** and the system will calculate the total amount requested. This amount is an estimate only and is not binding. If your LOI is approved, you may adjust the amount(s) in the full application stage. Hint: You must first select the project "duration" on the Title Page in order for the system to display the budget line(s) per project period.

LOI Section: Signature Page

All Applicant PIs must certify that that the statements provided in the LOI are true, complete, and accurate to the best of the applicant's knowledge. The applicant is aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. The applicant agrees to accept responsibility for the scholarly conduct of the project and to provide the required progress reports if a grant is awarded as a result of this application.

- **<u>Applicant Signature:</u> Check the box to certify the information in your LOI.**
- **<u>Signee:</u>** Type your full name into the field.
- **<u>Date:</u>** Select the date on which you have signed the LOI.

Review your LOI: Preview button

Click the **"Preview"** button to view or download a PDF of your LOI submission. The Preview button is made available so applicants may print or download their LOI submission. Click on the download or print icons (upper left corner) to view, print, or download the completed LOI. Refer to the LOI Submission Checklist (under Templates and Instructions) to make sure you have completed all necessary steps.

Submit your LOI

Click the "**Submit LOI**" button to submit your LOI to the program. If you decide not to submit the LOI and no longer want to be considered for this funding opportunity, you may wish to withdraw your LOI. Clicking on **"Withdraw"** will completely remove the LOI record from your account. In lieu of "Withdraw" you can choose not to submit a completed LOI.

Confirming Status of Your Submitted LOI

Following the submission of an LOI to *SmartSimple*, applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of the LOI. The email confirmation typically arrives within a few minutes (the length of time may be greater near the submission deadline). If you do not receive the *SmartSimple* confirmation email within an hour of your submission, please contact us using the contact information provided at the end of this document. You can also confirm the status of your LOI submission by going to your *SmartSimple* home page, under the **"Home"** link in the upper right corner and clicking on **"Submitted/Under Review Applications."**

Questions and Technical Support

Should you have any questions regarding your application, please contact:

- UC Research Initiatives at UCRI@ucop.edu regarding program scope, priorities, and eligibility.
- Research Grants Program Office at RGPOGrants@ucop.edu regarding application and pre/post-award procedures, and technical questions regarding *SmartSimple*.

For the most up-to-date application and review cycle information, please see UCRI's website.

Appendix 4:

Other RGPO Policies and Pre-Award Requirements

The following relevant policies and requirements for awards made by the UCOP Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) apply to all proposals nominated for funding. These requirements are outlined in the formal "pre-funding" notification that will be sent to applicants nominated for funding by the peer review and ranking process, and this appendix may not include <u>all</u> pre-award requirements.

Human Subjects and Material, Animal Subjects, and Biohazards:
Approvals for use of human subjects and material, animals, and biohazards are not required at the time of application. When such approvals are applicable to the research, applicants must apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible in order to expedite the start of the research and must do so within 30 days of notification that an award has been offered. Applicants may formally request an extension of this deadline if justified by specific circumstances of the research. All reasonable efforts must be made to obtain appropriate approvals in a timely fashion. Projects that do not obtain the necessary approvals in a timely manner may have their funding reduced or withdrawn.

For multicampus collaborations, if the research requires IRB approval, we encourage use of the UC IRB Reliance Registry to streamline the approval process. Please note that each study location is still responsible for obtaining other applicable ancillary approvals such as Conflict of Interest, Radiation Safety, etc. Contact your Campus IRB Reliance Coordinator for more information about the UC IRB reliance process.

Publications Acknowledgement and Open Access:
All scientific publications and other products from a RGPO-funded research project must acknowledge the funding support from UC Office of the President, with reference to the specific funding program (e.g., Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives) and the assigned grant ID number.

RGPO is committed to disseminating research as widely as possible to promote the public benefit. All publications based on funding received from RGPO are subject to the University's Open Access Policy. To assist the RGPO in disseminating and archiving the articles, the grantee institution and all researchers on the grant will deposit an electronic copy of all publications in the UC Publication Management System, UC's open access repository promptly after publication. Notwithstanding the above, this policy does not in any way prescribe or limit the venue of publication.

Deposition of Equipment and Supplies at the End of the Grant
Equipment purchases made by projects funded by the research program must be made by UC campuses and are the property of the UC Regents. Special permission must be sought in advance to purchase equipment for a non-UC campus or entity. In the rare event it is approved, the disposition of the equipment must follow RGPO rules.

Other Requirements
Upon request, awardees must supply the following information or documents:
1. Supply any missing application forms or materials, including detailed budgets and justifications for any subcontract(s).
2. IRB or IACUC applications or approvals pertaining to the award.
3. Resolution of any scientific overlap issues with other grants or pending applications.
4. Resolution of any Review Committee and Program recommendations, including specific aims, award budget, or duration.
5. Modify the title and lay abstract, if requested.

All grant recipients must abide by other applicable pre- and post-award requirements pertaining to Cost Share, Indirect Cost Rates, Monitoring & Payment of Subcontracts, Conflict of Interest, Disclosure of Violations, Return of Interest, Equipment and Residual Supplies, Records Retention, Open Access, and Reporting.